

~~Claims~~

CLAIMS

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. Device for avoiding traffic accidents where at least one vehicle with four or more wheels and another type of road user are involved and where said road user comes into
5 contact with at least part of a side of the vehicle, which vehicle is provided with means by means of which the presence of another road user in the vicinity of the side of the vehicle can be established by the driver of the vehicle, characterised in that said means are provided with at least one proximity sensor fixed in or on the relevant side of the vehicle by means of which the presence of an object within a strip of selectable width from the side
10 of the vehicle can be detected, which sensor is linked to an alarm sounding device by means of which the driver can be alerted if the sensor is activated.
2. Device according to Claim 1, characterised in that, the vehicle constitutes a motor vehicle with a chassis that is supported by at least three, in particular four or more, wheels.
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3. Device according to Claim 1, characterised in that the vehicle is constituted by a trailer that has to be pulled by a tractor in a known manner.
4. Device according to Claim 1, characterised in that the vehicle is constituted by the
20 combination of a tractor and trailer coupled thereto.
5. Device according to one of the preceding claims, characterised in that the proximity sensor is a pressure sensor by means of which the presence of a road user or object who/that is pressing against the side of the vehicle can be detected.
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6. Device according to Claim 5, characterised in that the pressure sensor is pressure-sensitive over an elongated surface.
7. Device according to Claim 6, characterised in that the sensor is pressure-sensitive
30 over virtually the entire length of the side concerned.

8. Device according to one of Claims 1 - 4, characterised in that the proximity sensor is a sensor that is sensitive to radiation, in particular infrared radiation, by means of which the presence of a road user in the vicinity of a side of the vehicle can be detected.
- 5 9. Device according to one of Claims 1 - 4, characterised in that the proximity sensor is a sensor that is sensitive to electromagnetic waves, in particular in the radar frequencies, by means of which the presence of a road user or object in the vicinity of the side of the vehicle can be detected.
- 10 10. Device according to one of Claims 8 or 9, characterised in that the sensitivity of the sensor is set such that an alarm is generated only in the case of detection of a road user or object within a predetermined distance from the relevant side of the vehicle.
11. Device according to one of the preceding claims, characterised in that the at least one
15 sensor is at a predetermined height above the road.
12. Device according to one of the preceding claims, characterised in that a number of sensors are installed, each at a different height above the road.
- 20 13. Device according to one of the preceding claims, employed with a motor vehicle that is provided on one side with a safety guard at a gap between the wheels, characterised in that at least one of the sensors is installed on the guard.
14. Device according to Claim 13, characterised in that at least one of the horizontal
25 parts of the guard extends past the rear wheels of the vehicle and in that at least one sensor is installed on this part and has a length that is virtually the same as that of the said part.
15. Device according to one of the preceding claims, characterised in that the link
30 link between the sensor or sensors and the alarm sounding device is a wireless communication link.
16. Device according to Claim 15, characterised in that transponder technology is used to implement the wireless communication link.

17. Device according to one of Claims 1 - 4, provided with a sensor as described in one of Claims 5 - 7 and a sensor as described in Claim 8 or a sensor as described in Claim 9 or both.
- 5 18. Device according to Claim 17, characterised in that the alarm sounding device is able to sound various alarms depending on the fact as to whether it is actuated by the sensor as described in one of Claims 5 - 7 or by the sensor as described in one of Claims 8 or 9.
- 10 19. Device according to one of the preceding claims, characterised in that in addition to the at least one proximity sensor there is also an acoustic sensor by means of which a signal that is audible to the driver can be generated under conditions that can be set.